



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 13 March 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
13 MARCH 1967

1. Communist China

The recently flagging "Cultural Revolution" is showing some sign of new life. A politburo member whom Chou En-lai had earlier defended has come under renewed poster attack in Peking. A recent editorial in the authoritative Red Flag complained that revolutionaries and the military were not being given a big enough role--and the party too big a one--in the new three-way governments being set up in the provinces.

The Chinese are also beating on the Soviets with renewed enthusiasm. Over the weekend they threw out two Soviet diplomats and protested the conduct of some Soviet frontier guards, whose worst sin apparently was to confiscate Mao's works from a Chinese train.

2. Soviet Union

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3. Vietnam

Communist forces in South Vietnam may have a rocket larger than the 140-mm. type used in the attack on the Da Nang Air Base last month. For one thing, a North Vietnamese defector claims to have been trained in the use of a 175-mm. rocket weapon. In addition, a new and very large Russian-made rocket fuse was recently discovered in South Vietnam.

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4. South Vietnam

The Constituent Assembly has finished its basic work on the draft constitution, which now needs only a few finishing touches. There are still some things to clear up with the military, but these will probably be ironed out without the Directorate having to use its veto. As things now stand, both government and assembly leaders think the constitution will be wrapped up by 27 March and promulgated in late April.

5. Latin America

Presidents Balaguer of the Dominican Republic and Arosemena of Ecuador now seem good bets to attend the Punta del Este summit meeting.

Bolivian President Barrientos

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has boxed himself in with his nationalistic statements on the access to the sea issue. Unless Chile obliges him by showing more willingness to talk, Barrientos will probably have to stay home.

President Lleras of Colombia may also have trouble going; his senate has threatened to deny him necessary permission to leave the country unless he first arranges to have a vice president elected.

6. Indonesia

We do not expect any real trouble to follow the congressional decree shelving Sukarno.

The whole campaign against him has been so drawn out and carefully orchestrated by acting President Suharto that this final step belongs in the department of anticlimax. The decree itself stops short of explicitly dismissing Sukarno--it just says he is "no longer capable" of doing his job. It also leaves it to Suharto to decide whether Sukarno will actually be brought to trial, a step he is not likely to take.

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7. France

De Gaulle's narrow margin in the new assembly will probably not result in any major policy changes. A number of independent conservatives are expected to support the government on most issues and, in any event, government policy can only be challenged by a censure motion passed by an assembly majority. This is a dubious prospect at best in view of the diversity of the opposition.

8. Soviet Union

Moscow so far is playing Svetlana Stalin's defection in very low key. The Soviet people are being told that she went to India to bury her husband's ashes; how long she stays abroad is her private affair. Tass is taking the same line for international audiences.

9. Britain - Soviet Union

The British ambassador in Moscow says negotiations will begin there soon on the friendship treaty. He expects it to have a preamble based on the United Nations Charter and its content limited to cultural, scientific, and economic cooperation.

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